

EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP

DATE/TIME: June 22, 2021 / 4:00pm EST SUBJECT: Public Transit Improvements

WEEK #: 9 MEETING LEADER: MTA, ESD, and AKRF

The following minutes prepared by Empire State Development (ESD) are a summary of the meeting and are intended to capture only the main points made in the meeting. Discrepancies should be reported to Gabriella Green at ESD within three (3) calendar days of distribution of this document.

PARTICIPANTS:

NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY	NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY
Betsy Schmid	U.S. Representative Carolyn	Tokumbo	The New School
	Maloney	Shobowale	
Wendi Paster	NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried	Larry Lennon	MTA
Matt Tighe	NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried	Peter Matusewitch	MTA
Laurie Hardjowirogo	NYC Councilman Corey Johnson	Robert Paley	MTA
Raju Mann	NYC Council	William Schwartz	MTA
Kyle Bragg	32BJ	Eric Lo	NYC Transit
Denis Johnston	32BJ	Petra Messick	Amtrak
Marrissa Williams	32BJ	Craig Shulz	Amtrak
Gary LaBarbera	Building & Construction Trades Council of NY	Sharon Tepper	Amtrak
Santos Rodriguez	Building & Construction Trades	Jeremy Colangelo-	NJ Transit
	Council of NY	Bryan	
Kevin Finnegan	Labor lawyer, formerly 1199	Todd DiScala	NJ Transit
Christine Berthet	Community Board 4	Joseph Quinty	NJ Transit
Paul Devlin	Community Board 4	Jennifer Sta. Ines	NYC DOT
Jeffrey LeFrancois	Community Board 4	Edith Hsu-Chen	NYC Department of Planning
Lowell Kern	Community Board 4	Josh Kraus	NYCEDC
Vikki Barbero	Community Board 5	Tyler Cukar	FX Collaborative
EJ Kalafarski	Community Board 5	Deniz Onder	FX Collaborative
Layla Law-Gisiko	Community Board 5	Jack Robbins	FX Collaborative
Clayton Smith	Community Board 5	John Schuyler	FX Collaborative
Eugene Sinigalliano	Resident Representative	Amy Shell	FX Collaborative
Basha Gerhards	Real Estate Board of New York	Toby Snyder	FX Collaborative
Dan Biederman	34 th Street Partnership	Chi Chan	AKRF
Dan Pisark	34 th Street Partnership	Connor Lacefield	AKRF
Brook Jackson	Partnership for New York City	Colin Montoute	WXY
Hope Knight	Greater Jamaica Development Corporation	Claire Weisz	WXY
Elizabeth Goldstein	The Municipal Art Society of NY	Stephane Lefebvre	Stantec
Rachel Weinberger	Regional Plan Association	Judy Kessler	Vornado
Liam Blank	Tri-State Transportation Campaign	Barry Langer	Vornado
Felicia Park-Rogers	Tri-State Transportation Campaign	Carl Weisbrod	Vornado (Consultant)
Renae Reynolds	Tri-State Transportation Campaign	Audrey Wilson	Vornado
Louis Bailey	WE ACT	Terence Cho	ESD
Marilyn Taylor	University of Pennsylvania	Anabel Frias	ESD

NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY	NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY
Gabriella Green	ESD		
Holly Leicht	ESD		
Phil Maguire	ESD		
Marion Phillips	ESD		
Angel Santana	ESD		
Rachel Shatz	ESD		
Noura von Briesen	ESD		

Location: Zoom

Item # Description / Discussion

1. INTRODUCTION AND HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS

- Marion Phillips, Senior VP of Community Relations at ESD, reminded all attendees to list their full name and affiliation in the Zoom Participant List.
- Marion advised the CACWG that any members having difficulty logging into Huddle should contact
 Angel Santana for further assistance. All CACWG members are encouraged to review and download the
 materials posted to Huddle for the meeting minutes, the presentations, and follow-up materials.
- Marion Phillips asked CACWG members to be mindful of when their camera is turned on.
- Marion requested that CACWG members ask their questions verbally rather than in the Zoom Chat window so nothing gets missed.
- Gabriella Green, CACWG Facilitator, announced that comments and corrections on the Neighborhood Conditions Study are due to ESD by July 30, 2021. ESD will review all comments and incorporate them into a revised or new study.

2. MTA PRESENTATION: SUBWAY MITIGATIONS

- Peter Matusewitch, VP at MTA Construction & Development and Project CEO for the Penn Station
 Master Plan ("PSMP"), began his <u>presentation</u> with an overview of the subway mitigations or
 "interventions" proposed in the <u>Draft Environmental Impact Statement</u> ("DEIS").
- The Empire Station Complex ("ESC") district is primarily served by the Herald Square, Seventh Avenue/Penn Station, and Eighth Avenue/Penn Station subway stations. These are the third, sixth, and seventh busiest subway stations, respectively, in New York City (the "City").
 - The combined ridership of the 34th Street subway stations on the Seventh and Eighth Avenue subway lines is greater than the ridership at the Lexington Avenue subway station at Grand Central Terminal, the second busiest subway station in the City. Only the ridership at the Times Square-42nd Street subway station exceeds the combined ridership of the Seventh and Eighth Avenue stations at 34th Street.
- Slide 4 is a map of all subway mitigations proposed in the DEIS that are expected to be completed by 2038, when the developments in the General Project Plan ("GPP"), Penn Reconstruction, Penn Expansion, and the Gateway projects are complete. These mitigations would be phased over time and be tied to each GPP development, as well as Penn Station and Gateway construction timing. In some cases and locations, more than one intervention is needed to mitigate an area of impact.
- Of the proposed subway mitigations, the majority are vertical circulation elements as shown below:

Subway Mitigation	Count
New easement entrances and stairs	9
New internal stairs	8
Widened stairs	15
Replacement of station escalators	8
New elevators	2
New passageways	4

TOTAL	49
Widened platforms	2
New mezzanine	1

- Providing new subway entrances in new developments or moving existing sidewalk entrances from street corners into buildings is a standard requirement of developers in the City.
 - The new subway entrances for ESC will be designed in accordance with the <u>Design Guidelines</u> ("DGs") as part of the GPP and will need to be approved by MTA and ESD.
 - ➤ MTA's goal for all new subway entrances is to be context-sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood and to the building in which they are located. Examples of varying design styles for subway stations that reflect their surroundings include the proposed new entrance at 60 Wall Street and the new entrances at One Vanderbilt, East 72nd Street, Times Square, and MetroTech (Brooklyn).
- Stair widenings at platforms and mezzanines would be basic replacement-in-kind, with little change in appearance. Stair widenings at subway entrances, such as the Seventh Avenue IRT 32nd Street entrance, may be part of a more extensive entrance refresh.
- The two planned platform widenings may also be accompanied by a full platform refresh.
- Note that the detailed subway illustrations shown in the presentation have been rotated to better fit in the slides; as a result, the north direction on the slides is to the right.
- At the Eighth Avenue subway station at 34th Street, there are seven interventions located between 33rd and 34th Streets, where most Penn Station riders enter or exit.
 - At the mezzanine level of the Eighth Avenue 34th Street subway station, which is below the platform level, the western end of the Long Island Railroad ("LIRR") 33rd Street Concourse in Penn Station ramps down a few feet to match the elevation of the subway mezzanine level to provide access to the subway and then ascends to the west to connect with the West End Concourse and Moynihan Train Hall ("Moynihan"). Most customers coming to or going from Penn Station via the Eighth Avenue subway lines do so here. Proposed improvements here include:
 - Widening two existing stairways (Nos. 3 and 4 on Slide 10) and installing three new stairways (Nos. 1, 2, and 5 on Slide 10) to handle increased volumes of customers.
 - Installing a new passageway in the sub-basement of 1 Penn West (No. 1 on Slide 10) to
 divert some riders to the stairways indicated by Nos. 2 and 3 on the north end of the
 platform, to better distribute riders along the platform. A diagonal passageway like this
 would be ideal but may interfere with the elevator core of 1 Penn West, so a "dogleg"
 around the core may have to be planned.
 - Adding a major new easement entrance that would serve both Penn Station and the Eighth Avenue subway station, as shown on Slide 10 by the red dashed line. This new entrance would have stairs, escalators and an elevator that go directly up to street level.
 - At the platform level of the Eighth Avenue station, the uptown local platform would be widened into the building line of 1 Penn West (No. 6 on Slide 11) as part of the construction of 1 Penn West. In addition, new entry street stairs are proposed at Nos. 7 and 8 on Slide 11, along with a new elevator at No. 8.
- At the Seventh Avenue subway station at 34th Street, more mitigations are proposed than at either the Eighth Avenue or Herald Square stations because the DEIS projects the highest number of impacts at this station among the three stations.
 - At the mezzanine level, which is below the platforms at this station as well, there are three underpasses below Seventh Avenue.
 - At the 32nd Street underpass, which is a paid-zone, one new stairway to the express platform, indicated by No. 2 on Slide 13, would be added. Three stairways would also be widened here.

- The 33rd Street underpass, a free zone, would be converted to a paid zone, with a second new stairway to the express platform, shown at No. 1 on Slide 13. Three stairways would also be widened or relocated here. However, there is also an alternate proposed plan to preserve this undercrossing as a free zone and widen it to become part of a larger underground pedestrian concourse.
- To the north of the 33rd Street underpass, a new easement entrance stairway is proposed from 1 Penn Plaza East (No. 5 on Slide 13), with a new passageway connection to the 34th Street paid zone undercrossing.
- At the platform level of the Seventh Avenue station, the northbound local platform would be widened into the property line of 15 Penn and Block 809 (Nos. 16 and 12 on Slide 14). These platform widenings would be done as part of the construction of the buildings proposed in the GPP for these sites and likely would be completed when each of those sites is developed.
- Entrance improvements at the Seventh Avenue subway station include:
 - A new easement entrance in 1 Penn East serving both Penn Station and the subway (Nos. 5 and 6 on Slide 14);
 - o A separate easement entrance at the location marked No. 7 on Slide 14;
 - A new elevator added at the location marked No. 8 on Slide 14;
 - Reopening a formerly closed entrance from the upper level of Penn Station to the southbound local platform, labeled as No. 20 on Slide 14, which is notable for its Guastavino tile walls and ceiling and would once again be publicly visible; and
 - New in-building easement entrances, replacing sidewalk stairs, at Nos. 11, 14, 15 and 17 on Slide 14.
- At the Herald Square station, there are seven areas of intervention located between 32nd and 34th Streets. The station has a complicated configuration in which the Broadway subway line platforms are shallow, while the Sixth Avenue subway line platforms are deep. The Sixth Avenue lines also follow the rectangular above-grade street grid, while the Broadway lines follow Broadway and meander across the street grid.
 - ➤ The Herald Square station main entry to both the Broadway and 6th Avenue lines is a mezzanine located one level down that spans 34th and 35th Streets. The shallow Broadway line platforms are served by stairs from this mezzanine, and the deep Sixth Avenue line platforms are served by eight escalators as well as ramp and stair combinations.
 - No. 1 on Slide 17 represents the 8 escalators that travel down to the Sixth Avenue platforms. The GPP proposes to replace these escalators with wider and faster models that would provide increased capacity. The GPP also proposes to widen stairs that go to street entrances shown at No. 2 on Slide 17.
 - ➤ Between 32nd and 33rd Streets, at the south end of Herald Square station, there are three mezzanine levels. The Broadway line platforms are served by a shallow mezzanine level. The Port Authority Trans-Hudson ("PATH") platforms are served by a mezzanine one-half level below the Broadway line platforms. The lowest mezzanine level serves the Sixth Avenue line platforms and is lower than the sub-basement of the adjacent Manhattan Mall.
 - The stairs from the Broadway line platform at the south end of the station (circled in red on Slide 17) are overcrowded but cannot be widened. In order to add capacity, MTA is proposing to add a mezzanine overpass (No. 6 on Slide 17), with a new stairway down to each platform.
 - At the mezzanine level serving the Sixth Avenue line platform, the DEIS proposes to install two new stairs (No. 6 on Slide 18) from the platforms that would go up to the new mezzanine overpass referenced above. Additional proposed improvements at this level include the construction of two new stairways up to the PATH level to improve connectivity (No. 6 on Slide 18) and the widening of two stairways going down to the Sixth Avenue platforms (No. 7 on Slide 18).

3. MTA PRESENTATION: PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

- The GPP includes shared streets on 32nd and 33rd Streets and wider sidewalks at every proposed new building to ease sidewalk congestion. These improvements would mitigate most of the sidewalk pedestrian level of service ("LOS") impacts identified in the DEIS.
- The only sidewalk adverse impacts identified in the DEIS that would not be mitigated upon full build-out
 are select crosswalks in the area and some walking routes to and from Herald Square during the AM and
 PM peak hours.
- MTA looked at the origins and destinations of passengers once they arrive at or leave Penn Station as well as the locations of where people board trains at Penn Station.
 - Pedestrian counts and visual observations found that 70% of passengers arriving at or leaving Penn Station come from or travel to the east and north, that is, to the East Midtown office district. The other 30% of passengers were found to be coming from or going to the west.
 - ➤ Data from the Railroads (Amtrak, MTA and NJ Transit) shows that two-thirds of passengers board their trains on the east side of Penn Station, while the remaining one-third board on the west side of Penn Station.
 - The redevelopment of the far west side of Manhattan is expected to increase the number of Penn Station customers coming from or going to the west because of increased job, shopping and tourism opportunities that the redevelopment will bring. However, because the East Midtown district is much larger than the far west side and will also see new development and job growth spurred by the district's recent rezoning, the Penn Station customers coming from and going to the east will also increase. Therefore, the Railroads' projections are that the 70/30% split of passengers going east versus west to and from Penn Station will not shift perceptively.
- The GPP includes the re-opening of the Gimbels passageway under 33rd Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues as a proposed pedestrian mitigation, which was originally required by the expired special permit approved by the City for Vornado a decade ago. The DEIS found that the passageway as currently constructed would be overcrowded at full build-out of the GPP development and would need further improvement.
- The DEIS also found unmitigated subway line-haul impacts, particularly on the Seventh Avenue subway line at 34th Street, at full build-out in 2038.
- To address these unmitigated impacts, MTA is looking at other possible solutions to relieve street-level impacts on Seventh Avenue, impacts at the crosswalks, and the line-haul impacts at the Seventh Avenue subway.
 - MTA is studying pedestrian concourse alternatives including improving the existing Gimbels passageway and/or building a new and/or more extensive underground pedestrian concourse. Below-grade pedestrian concourses have been used successfully in New York City and around the world to relieve at-grade congestion.
 - Vornado has proposed an improvement to the Gimbels passageway plan studied in the DEIS. Vornado's new proposed design would widen the passageway partially into 15 Penn and out into 33rd Street at Manhattan Mall as indicated in yellow on Slide 27.
 - A second alternative underground concourse configuration would place the pedestrian concourse under 32nd Street and add a north-south leg from Penn Expansion up to the north side of 34th Street under the buildings on the east side of Seventh Avenue. This alternative would also travel under Seventh Avenue at 32nd and 33rd Streets.
 - A third alternative would have the Herald Square underground connector run through the second basements of the new 15 Penn and the existing Manhattan Mall, as close to 32nd Street as feasible. Like the second alternative, this alternative would also have a north-south leg from Penn expansion and would have potential crossings under Seventh Avenue at 32nd and 33rd Streets. This third alternative would be less costly than the second alternative since it would be constructed within existing buildings, but both are more costly than an expanded Gimbels passage. ESD, MTA and Vornado are analyzing the feasibility and cost/benefit of these alternatives.

- MTA preliminarily estimates that Alternatives 2 and 3 may capture up to 75% of the pedestrians crossing Seventh Avenue.
 - For Alternatives 2 and 3, "Segment 1," the first phase of the concourse system, would be constructed around the time of the construction of the new 15 Penn (Site 7) and the reconstruction of existing Penn Station.
 - The undercrossing below Seventh Avenue between 31st and 32nd Streets would be located as close as possible to the LIRR 32nd Street tunnel throat, which would be near the north-south center of the combined Penn Station and Penn Expansion. This undercrossing would go north through the basement of 11 Penn Plaza and under 32nd Street. MTA anticipates this work being done as part of the PSMP.
 - Segment 1 would continue north through the basement of 15 Penn Plaza to meet the
 underground concourse under 32nd street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, where
 customers could exit to the street. It would then go up a level and continue north to 33rd
 Street at the same elevation as the subway platforms, with at least one direct connection
 to the northbound platform. MTA anticipates this work being done as part of the
 construction of Site 7.
 - This new Seventh Avenue undercrossing would connect to the lower level of Penn Station, descend between six to eight feet, cross under the Seventh Avenue subway, and then ascend to the elevation of the Site 7 second basement level, where there would also be another stairway that would go up to subway platform level to continue north.
- Vornado and Stantec studied a possible concept for Alternative 2 in which the passageway would run about four feet inboard of the property line of Site 7 and up against the column line of Manhattan Mall. There would be an exit up to the street midway, at the east end of Site 7, and it would turn north at the Sixth Avenue end of Manhattan Mall to connect to the Herald Square subway station. This approach reflects that Site 7 is anticipated to be developed well ahead of the Manhattan Mall (Site 8). MTA anticipates this work could be done as part of the construction of Site 7.
- Alternative 3 traveling entirely through Sites 7 and 8 would feed into the Sixth Avenue subway mezzanine.
 - o In Alternative 3, pedestrians would go up a flight for the Broadway line trains.
 - If Alternative 3 is selected, MTA anticipates the construction for Segment 1 being done by Vornado with the construction of Site 7.
- "Segment 2," the second phase of the concourse system, is an underground connector between the Penn Expansion and Segment 1, under Seventh Avenue and through the basement of 11 Penn. MTA anticipates the construction for Segment 2 to be done as part of Penn Expansion.
- Segment 3," the last phase of the concourse system, would extend the north-south passageway north from 33rd Street to 34th Street.
 - The north-south portion of Segment 3 would run through the basement of Block 809, which is Site 6 of the GPP, so it would be done as part of the construction of Site 6.
 - The existing free-zone subway undercrossing of Seventh Avenue would be reconfigured to provide a more useful and higher-capacity connection between Penn Station and the north-south concourse, as shown by the red-dashed line on Slide 42.
- ➤ Vornado and Stantec studied developed a concept for the second undercrossing of 7th Avenue proposed at 33rd Street. In this concept, the existing 1/2/3 subway station's fare control array would be relocated to the west side of the station entry, and the free-zone undercrossing at 33rd Street would be widened to the north.
 - Two existing stairways and one existing elevator would be relocated to the north and a new stairway and fare control array would be added at the south side of the passageway. These are all counted in the subway mitigations identified in the DEIS and shown earlier in the presentation.
 - The proposed entry to Penn Station in this concept would be located at the corner of 34th
 Street and Seventh Avenue, running diagonally within the footprint of Site 5, and would

meet the lower level of Penn Station roughly where MTA anticipates the eastern north-south concourse of Penn Reconstruction would be.

At the existing free-zone undercrossing at 33rd Street looking east from Penn Station, MTA would move the fare array and the stairs between the fare array and the columns. Then new stairs would be added opposite this stairway and these new stairs would lead to a new fare array.

4. MTA PRESENTATION: BUS SERVICE

- The Empire Station Complex district is served by 57 New York City Transit ("NYCT") express bus routes and ten NYCT local bus routes, making this district one of the best-served areas of New York City by bus service.
 - None of these routes is projected to experience more than 50 additional riders in a peak hour, so there are no significant adverse impacts warranting mitigation.
- "Bus Only" lanes were added to 34th Street in 2008. Shortly after, NYC Department of Transportation ("DOT") proposed a new two-way transitway on one side of the corridor, with boarding from both a central mall and sidewalk, and one-way traffic on the other side. DOT did public outreach through 2010, but this plan was ultimately abandoned due to persistent community opposition.
 - In 2011, MTA launched Select Bus Service along the 34th Street corridor, with off-board fare collection and expanded bus stops with bus bulb-outs.
 - ➤ MTA currently has no current plans to make further changes to bus services along the 34th Street corridor, but bus routes continue to be studied on an ongoing basis. With the success of the 14th Street busway, 34th Street may eventually be revisited as a candidate if community sentiment changes.
- Bus service planning by MTA happens on two levels:
 - At the network level, MTA is currently in the process of redesigning the bus networks in all five boroughs. The redesign has been completed and implemented for Staten Island. The redesigns for the other boroughs have been on pause due to the COVID pandemic but will resume. In 2020 prior to the pandemic, the Final Plan for the Bronx, the Draft Plan for Queens and the Existing Conditions Report for Brooklyn were released. The redesign for Manhattan has not yet begun.
 - On the route level, bus ridership and running times are routinely monitored, and service is adjusted accordingly. Major bus service plans are typically developed with at least a one-year planning horizon and can take several years to implement, as they involve extensive outreach and coordination with DOT and other agencies. Given the lack of any significant adverse impacts on bus service, no major service changes are currently being considered in the ESC district.
 - As the GPP developments, Penn Expansion and Gateway Projects come online, MTA will routinely monitor ridership and running times and will make service adjustments warranted by the data.
- DOT has a companion plan to MTA's efforts to improve bus running times, called the "Better Buses
 Action Plan." The focus of this plan is on implementing physical and traffic operation changes that will
 help increase bus speeds, which are constrained by general traffic conditions. DOT works with MTA to
 identify priority locations for implementing the various bus priority tools at its disposal.

5. ESD PRESENTATION: DISTRICT BIKE NETWORK & BIKE PARKING

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- Phil Maguire, VP of Design & Construction Management at ESD, <u>showed</u> the existing network of Citibike stations and bicycle lanes in the ESC district. The GPP proposes to strengthen the bicycle network by:
 - Creating a new bicycle lane on Seventh Avenue in front of Penn Station;
 - Coordinating with DOT on extending the existing bicycle lane on Eighth Avenue (already approved by DOT); and
 - > Creating a new bicycle lane on 31st Street between Sixth and Ninth Avenues.
- NYC zoning requires bicycle parking for tenants and users of office buildings at a ratio of one bicycle parking space per 10,000 square feet ("SF") of office space. The draft DGs require twice as much bicycle parking for the GPP developments, at a ratio of one space per 5,000 SF of office space.
 - ➤ In addition, the DGs would require one bicycle parking space for every 7,000 SF of retail or community facility space. These spaces could be made available for overnight and secured commuter bicycle parking.
- The DGs would require, in total, 2,965 bicycle parking spaces in the GPP project area, as compared to 1,980 spaces under NYC zoning, broken down below by GPP site as follows:
 - Site 1: 151 spaces
 - Site 2: 1,017 spaces
 - Site 3: 286 spaces
 - Site 4: 72 spaces
 - o Site 5: 301 spaces
 - Site 6: 328 spaces
 - O Site 7: 405 spaces
 - Site 8: 404 spaces
- The DGs envision that the bicycle spaces provided in the GPP developments would be made available for overnight and secured parking.
- The DGs express a preference for bicycle parking spaces and facilities to be at grade. If at-grade bicycle
 parking is not possible, bicycle parking would have to be located a maximum of one level above or below
 ground level, with minimal stairs and a preference for ramps and elevators.

6. AKRF PRESENTATION: PROJECT COMPONENTS AND WHAT WAS ANALYZED IN DEIS

- Chi Chan, VP of Traffic & Transportation at AKRF, <u>summarized</u> the main ESC project components, public transit, and public realm improvements considered in the DEIS, based on the following assumptions:
 - ➤ 15.9 million SF of commercial development upon full build-out;
 - ➤ Ridership growth, including projections for Penn Expansion;
 - > Transit improvements including the proposed east-west below-grade pedestrian passageway, new station entrances and platform stairs, and widened platforms; and
 - Public realm improvements including building setbacks, shared streets, bicycle lanes, and open spaces.
- The DEIS analyzed three main traffic and transportation components:
 - ➤ 108 traffic intersections as part of a traffic study area bound by the East and Hudson Rivers from 23rd to 42nd Street;
 - ➤ 103 station elements at the three 34th Street subway stations (Herald Square, Seventh Avenue/Penn Station, and Eighth Avenue/Penn Station); and
 - ▶ 245 pedestrian elements as part of a pedestrian study area bound by Sixth and Nineth Avenues from 29th to 41st Street.
 - Pedestrian trips made between the Penn Station area and the Port Authority Bus
 Terminal were analyzed as part of the analysis of trips made on Seventh and Eighth
 Avenues.
- The EIS estimates that the commercial development will generate 34,000 new person trips during the peak hour. Of those 34,000 trips, approximately half, or 17,000 trips, are expected to be made by subway, 18% by commuter rail, 13% by walking, 11% by bus, and 8% by automobile or taxi.

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- The DEIS estimates that Penn Expansion will generate 43,000 new person trips during the peak hour. Of those 43,000 trips, approximately two-thirds, or 29,000 trips, are expected to be made by NJ Transit, 25% on LIRR and Metro-North, and 8% on Amtrak.
- The transportation modes that commuter passengers use to get to their final destinations after arriving at Penn Station are as follows:
 - Over half of NJ Transit customers connect to the subway after arriving at Penn Station, followed by 37% walking, 5% bus, 3% taxi, and 1% another commuter rail service.
 - Most LIRR customers either connect to the subway or walk to their final destination.
 - About 35% of Amtrak customers connect to a taxi, followed by 33% walking, 25% subway, 5% commuter rail, and 2% bus.
- To estimate the volume of trips to analyze in the DEIS, AKRF worked with DOT and MTA to establish the existing baseline traffic and pedestrian volumes in the transportation study areas. AKRF gathered additional data to estimate a future volume of trips, against which AKRF assessed the ESC project's impacts. This additional data includes trips derived from background growth, future publicly known planned development projects in the area (of which AKRF identified ~80), all potential as-of-right developments in the ESC project area, and railroad ridership growth without the proposed Penn Station projects. The sum of the trips generated by these conditions is the "No Action Volume." Adding new trips generated by the ESC project components (i.e., the GPP developments and Penn Expansion) results in the "With Action Volume."
 - ➤ The No Action and With Action Volumes analyzed in the EIS for traffic (study area intersection movements), pedestrian (study area crosswalks), and transit (subway station control areas and vertical circulation elements) are shown below:

Category	Existing	No Action Volume	With Action Volume
Traffic – AM Peak	215,000	270,000	297,000
Traffic – PM Peak	216,000	282,000	304,000
Pedestrian – AM Peak	166,000	249,000	292,000
Pedestrian – PM Peak	147,000	218,000	249,000
Transit – AM Peak	62,000	80,000	106,000
Transit – PM Peak	60,000	86,000	108,000

- Slides 11 and 12 show the impacts of the public realm improvements on the pedestrian experience and levels-of-service (LOS) in the GPP project area during the AM and PM peak hours. For most of the area, the LOS is unchanged or improves with improvements such as sidewalk widenings and increased building setbacks. There are a few areas of deterioration, meaning relatively worse than the future baseline condition.
- AKRF explored measures with DOT and the MTA that would mitigate impacts identified in the DEIS to the
 extent practicable. AKRF will continue to explore mitigation strategies for the Final Environmental Impact
 Statement ("FEIS"), including coordinating with MTA's PSMP efforts.
- It is critical to note that the GPP developments will require compliance with a transportation monitoring plan that will be developed alongside the FEIS ("TMP") and will be updated on an ongoing basis through build-out to evaluate actual future conditions, and if necessary, require new mitigation strategies.

7. Q&A AND COMMENTS

- Tokombo Shobowale, The New School
 - We need to aim higher than maintaining the current experience. The goal of the project should be to improve the quality of the entire experience from entering Penn Station to arriving at a final destination.
 - ➤ A dedicated bus rapid transit system should be strongly considered for the 34th Street corridor.

 On 14th Street, the Bus Only lanes were transformative and improved the experience of taking a

bus. If we can improve the experience of taking a bus on 34th Street, more people may take it instead of the subway which would relieve stress and crowding on the subway system.

• EJ Kalafarski, CB5

- Were the subway improvement plans coordinated with any of the improvements planned by Macy's at Herald Square?
 - MTA has been in discussions with Macy's about their plans for development at Herald Square and will continue to monitor and make any changes that may be necessary for Penn Station if that project advances.
- ➤ Has MTA considered increasing the number of trains to accommodate the increased connections to the subway by commuter passengers?
 - NYCT continuously reviews and monitors ridership as part of its daily operations to plan
 for adjustments in service, similar to bus planning. If during the build-out of ESC or after
 its completion, subway ridership increases lead to operational problems, NYCT would
 plan service changes that may include additional trains.
- Is it possible that the future baseline automobile traffic volumes may decrease with congestion pricing?
 - Chi Chan stated that it is possible that automobile traffic volumes will decrease with congestion pricing. Congestion pricing is currently in the early stage of its federal environmental review, so we do not have the benefit of that data yet. However, AKRF has seen from U.S. Census data and DOT surveys a trend of higher use of public transit generally and would expect that this trend in combination with congestion pricing would lead to a decrease in automobile traffic.
- The areas that show a deterioration in level of pedestrian service would be a good target for investments in public realm improvements. For example, the area on Eighth Avenue in front of the Hulu Theater has a poor level of pedestrian service.
 - The proposed shared streets on 32nd and 33rd Streets would improve the pedestrian experience; however, since implementation would require design work and approval by DOT, their benefits were not accounted for in the DEIS's analysis of pedestrian conditions. Along Eighth Avenue, improvements (i.e., substantial sidewalk widening and improved bike lanes) to the west side of the Avenue are planned by DOT, but the DEIS analysis did not assume a potential shift of pedestrians from the narrower sidewalks on the east side to the widened sidewalks on the west side of the Avenue, again, to be conservative. As such, the EIS pedestrian analysis likely under-estimates the pedestrian benefits of these proposed interventions, which should improve both the pedestrian experience and LOS.

• Christine Berthet, CB4

- The bicycle network improvement plan is well thought-out, particularly the guidelines of minimal stairs at bicycle parking facilities and overnight access. One improvement that should be included is a two-way bike lane on 31st street.
- How many ADA-accessible features are part of the subway mitigations? And how many tracks or platforms at Penn Station will not be ADA-accessible?
 - The Herald Square, Seventh Avenue/Penn Station, and Eighth Avenue/Penn Station subway stations are currently ADA-compliant. As part of the proposed public transit mitigations, two new elevators are proposed at two new entrances to Penn Station. In addition, as new entrances get built as part of the GPP developments, more elevators are expected to be installed that will further increase accessibility.
- Will the proposed underground concourses be ADA-accessible?
 - Because the underground concourses ascend a maximum of one level, ADA requirements are not triggered. In addition, MTA has seen that investments in

increasing ADA-accessibility are better made within a station itself rather than in accessory connections.

- Once all subway mitigations are put into operation, will all subway platforms at Penn Station be ADA-accessible?
 - All subway platforms at Penn Station will be ADA-accessible after installation of all subway mitigations.
- The analysis should reconsider the growth of commuter traffic west of Penn Station, and mitigations need to be designed to handle the increased pedestrian volumes. The desire lines shown on Slide 24 of the MTA presentation do not seem to consider the impact on pedestrian volumes of shifting LIRR trains after East Side Access opens. Instead of a 70/30% split of pedestrians going to and coming from east and west of Penn Station, it will be more like 50/50%. The effects will particularly be felt on Eighth Avenue, and more investments need to be made to mitigate the pedestrian volumes.
- It would be helpful to have an origin-destination study of the commuters broken down by railroad service (LIRR, Metro-North, NJ Transit, and Amtrak).

Elizabeth Goldstein, MAS

- It seems that a guiding principle to improving connectivity between Penn Station and the subway network should be that all improvements should help people move as smoothly as possible. The presentation of the underground passageways shows many stairways which hinder both formal and informal accessibility. By contrast to airports, there seems to be a dearth of ramps, escalators, people-movers and other elements that would help people move seamlessly among the multiple levels in the proposed pedestrian concourse network.
- ➤ If you are going from Moynihan to Sixth Avenue, how many stairways would you have to use, and could some stairways be replaced with ramps and escalators? Are we doing everything we can to make the underground passageways as easy as possible for people to use?
 - The NYC subway system was not designed with ease of accessibility in mind. It is tight, cramped and presents constraints in every single direction that often prevent installing improvements such as ramps and escalators in locations where we would like to put them. To do a complete overhaul of the configuration of the subway network to allow for more accessible vertical circulation elements, similar to what the PSMP is doing for Penn Station, would cost as much as Penn Reconstruction due to high costs such as moving utilities and buying property. This investment may be a possibility for future transportation investment.

Jeffrey LeFrancois, CB4

- As others have mentioned, there are too many stairs and up and down movements required of pedestrians in the proposed pedestrian concourse.
- > We need to continue to look at the relocation of Madison Square Garden ("MSG"). The MSG patron volumes on the streets and in the station and MSG's truck loading activities inhibit any real improvements that can be made at Penn Station.
- Seventh and Eighth Avenues should have express bus service, and 34th Street should be restricted to bus—only traffic like 14th Street today.

Felicia Park-Rogers, TSTC

- Does the DEIS call for the addition of new protected bicycle lanes?
 - Please see response to Question #13 in the Q&A posted to <u>Huddle</u> on July 28.
- Can MTA provide the data that supports its determination that only two new elevators are needed and the data that supports the selection of the eight elevators that will be rehabilitated? TSTC supports improvements in accessibility for the disabled or those with physical limitations with additional elevators or escalators.

- Please see response to Question #14 in the Q&A posted to Huddle on July 28.
- TSTC supports the conversion of 34th Street into a cross-town busway and suggests the addition of a pedestrian-way on 32nd Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues to better connect pedestrians to Herald Square and the many transit options there. Additionally, TSTC believes there should be traffic calming measures on 7th Avenue.
- ➤ While it is good that an underground connection is being proposed, above-ground pedestrian routes are equally if not more important. TSTC echoes the comments of Christine Berthet that there will be more pedestrian traffic west of Penn Station towards Eighth Avenue in the future.
- TSTC supports thoughtful consideration of the lighting and design of underground corridors to make them more attractive and usable for pedestrians and people limited mobilities.
- Layla Law Gisiko, CB5
 - > Has MTA been in coordination with Macy's over plans for improvements at Herald Square?
 - MTA's Transit-Oriented Development group has been in discussions with Macy's and the City about proposals for improvements at Herald Square. The Macy's proposal is in its early stages, and MTA will continue to coordinate its plans with Macy's and ensure there is no overlap.
 - ➤ Will the Macy's upzoning proposal be included in the FEIS?
 - ESD, in coordination with DOT, will include any relevant impacts from confirmed aspects
 of the Macy's proposal into the analysis for the FEIS.
 - What is the budget for the subway mitigations, and is it part of the \$6-8 billion New York State local share of the Gateway and Penn Station project costs?
 - MTA does not yet have cost estimates for the subway improvements. Any subway improvement costs not covered by the developers of the GPP sites will be added to the Penn Reconstruction budget.
- Marilyn Taylor, UPenn
 - What are the plans for taxi, ride-hail and other on-demand transportation services at Penn Station?
 - Please see response to Question #15 in the Q&A posted to Huddle on July 28.
- Paul Devlin, CB4
 - We need to first figure out the station, infrastructure, transit and public realm improvements that we need to best move people in and around Penn Station and the cost for these improvements. Then we should calculate the amount of development that could be sold to support these costs, even if that would mean allowing a 33 floor area ratio ("FAR").
 - We should commit to full accessibility for mobility impaired individuals rather than simply complying with ADA requirements. The entire experience of transferring from one mode (e.g., NJ Transit) to another mode (e.g., MTA Broadway line) should be non-restrictive; someone in a wheelchair should not be restricted to only one egress from a station to only one entrance to another station. In addition, all staircases should be eliminated from the plans for the proposed underground passageways.
 - Can the old passageway between Hotel Pennsylvania and Penn Station be reopened? This could be a third alternative underground crossing of Seventh Avenue in addition to the two new ones proposed by MTA.
 - Please see response to Question #16 in the Q&A posted to <u>Huddle</u> on July 28.
 - For bicycle storage, the plans for internal spaces for commuters is laudable, but bicycle storage should be at grade with high public visibility. The use of internal bike "garages" is likely to become a cultivated experience for occupants of the buildings, while there remains a high need for temporary bicycle storage for uses such as bicycle deliveries.

Item # Description / Discussion

10. CONCLUSION

Marion Phillips closed CACWG #9.

11. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS POSTED IN ZOOM CHAT OR POST-CACWG FOLLOW-UP

- Basha Gerhards, REBNY
 - ➤ Do the bicycle parking requirements reflect anticipated reduction in vehicles and traffic from congestion pricing?
 - See response above: since the EIS for congestion pricing has not been completed, there
 is not yet data on its impacts, and therefore its impacts are not reflected in the ESC DEIS.
 This would be an example of something that would be part of the TMP as future
 conditions are revealed.
- Louis Bailey, WE ACT
 - > The IND platforms have great mezzanines that aren't being used or have been repurposed.
 - ➤ We need to address true bus rapid transit service on 34th street in any discussions about flows around Penn Station and PABT. The Select Bus Service currently in place on 34th Street is not true bust rapid transit service.